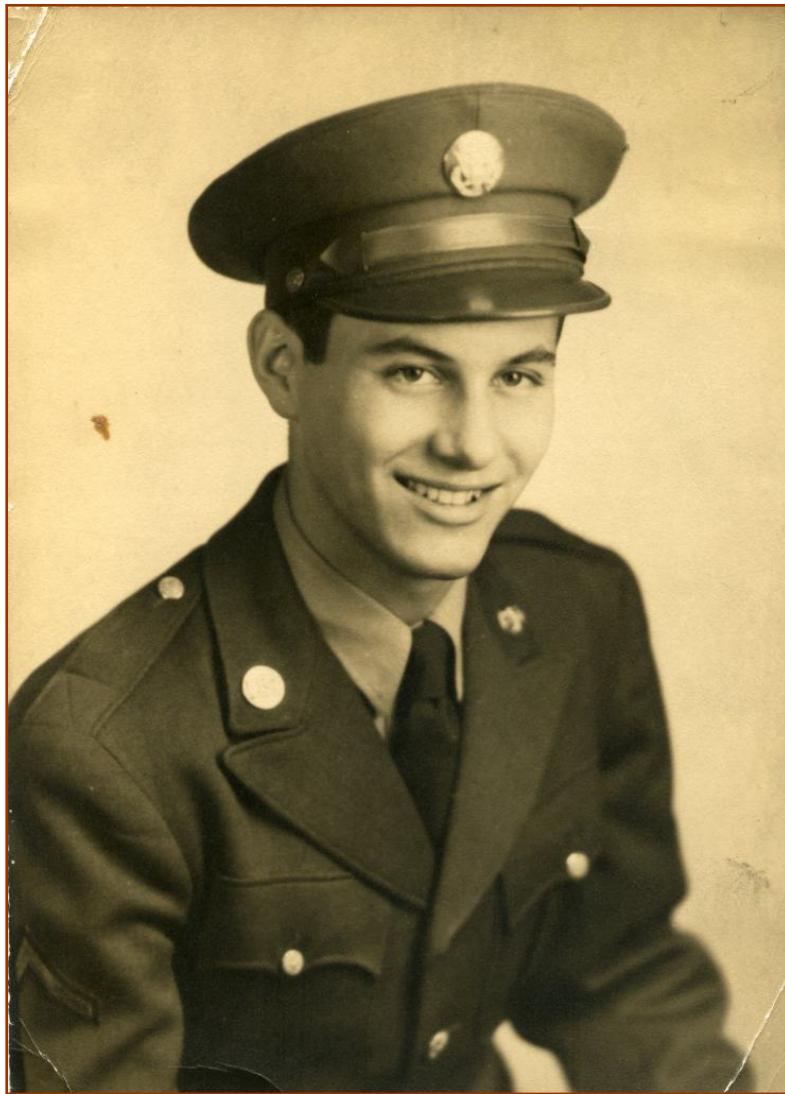


THE FIRST WORLD WAR, THE SEQUEL  
VALENTINE WILLIAM SMITH, PRIVATE FIRST CLASS  
UNITED STATES ARMY SIGNAL SERVICE CORPS



BRIAN A. SMITH, D.C.

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## Dedication

This work is dedicated to its subject – Valentine William “Billy” Smith – just “Dad” to me.

Never a man of many words (a habit probably instilled at a very young age when he was regularly drowned out by 5 boisterous sisters – a trait that seems to have been passed down genetically somehow) Dad said little about WW II and even less about his service during that war.

Fiji – *where’s that?*

Olga – *who’s that?*

Tinian? – *Never heard of it*

Signal Service Corps – *what’s that?*

Meritorious Service Commendation – *for what?*

It is doubtful he ever saw any actual fighting and there's no report of any danger to the various ships he traveled on getting to, and around, the South Pacific – if he had any brush with hostilities, he never mentioned it. He was stationed at only one place that had been under enemy control – Tinian. He arrived there in March 1945, seven months after the island's capture and three months after the last enemy attack against the island. True – there were about 500 non-combatant Japanese hiding out in the caves that dotted the slopes of the volcanoes – but they were more of a threat if you had an ice cream cone rather than a gun – they had no weapons to fight with. They also had great hunger and the sight of an ice cream cone might just trigger something unexpected. Equally true was the presence of a 200-strong Japanese garrison on the tiny island of Aguijan lying just three miles south across the Tinian Channel – but the military record is unusually silent about them. They were known to be there when Saipan, Guam and Tinian were captured in summer 1944 – and they were still there when Japan formally surrendered on 2 September 1945 – they must have been the Japanese equivalent of the stereotypical laid-back Southern California surfer dude – they don't seem to have bothered anybody. It also seems that Japan wasn't overly concerned (or even slightly concerned) about the precarious situation that tiny garrison was in – they managed to launch attacks against Tinian for five months but not a single rescue attempt?

Dad maintained that he knew nothing about the atomic bomb until after the fact – yet never even mentioned his units Meritorious Service award covering the same time frame – and even the “official” record of that award is silent on the specifics. Perhaps he was just maintaining the silence required to obtain a military security clearance (which he would do twice in the 1960s) that surrounded the Manhattan Project – just like he was silent on Beartrap, the military project he was involved with on Adak – a silence the drove his twin sister Kathryn up the wall!!

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## Introduction

The history of World War II in Europe is widely known – beginning with the Nazi invasion of Poland in September 1939, the rest of Europe had fallen like dominoes:

Italy, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Greece and the Balkans all were under the Nazi flag; Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan and large parts of North Africa were allied to the Nazi's or under their repressive occupation; Spain held a tenuous neutrality following their devastating civil war in which the Nazi-backed victors of GENERALISSIMO FRANCO goose-stepped in concert with the Nazi storm-troopers; and most of Romania was occupied by the Nazi's, though the much-reduced "free" Romania remained a firm friend of the Allies under the rule of QUEEN MARIE.

Needing to keep Soviet forces tied down Nazi Germany entered into a tentative agreement with Imperial Japan. A joint victory would result in an expanded Japanese Empire that encompassed India and all land to the east while the Third Reich ruled over all lands west of India. Japan, as an ally of the victors in World War I, obtained all the islands north of the equator belonging to the former *German Protectorate of New Guinea* in 1917. Germany had bought the island groups from Spain in 1899. In fact, it was Britain's desire to ally with Japan in World War I that created the formidable Japanese Navy as well as Japanese dreams of Empire. To oust the Germans from their Pacific holdings, Britain financed a huge growth of both the Army and Navy of Japan. All former-German holdings south of the equator went to Australia and New Zealand, part of the British Commonwealth.

The growth of the Japanese Empire and the reasons for turning on the very powers that financed its military growth and allowed its territorial expansion is less well known. Japan had been in conflict with China continually since the 1870s as both powers sought to expand their empires.



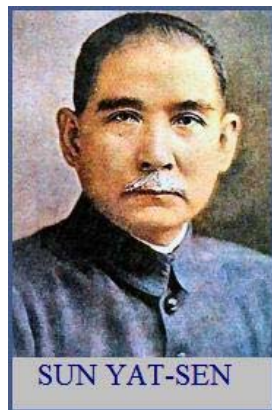
EMPEROR HIROHITO – the 124<sup>th</sup> lineal descendant from AMATERASU OMIKAMI, the Sun Goddess and a *Daughter of Heaven*. EMPEROR JIMMU (died circa 585 B.C.E.), the God of the Sun, is considered to be the founder of the Japanese Imperial line and to be the *Son of Heaven*. The Greater Japanese Empire with EMPEROR MEIJI at the Imperial helm was created in 1868. Under MEIJI the armed forces grew as did the Empire: 1879 saw the conquering of the Ryukyu Island Kingdom of which Okinawa is the best known. In 1894 Japan invaded China which resulted with the addition of Korea, Taiwan, the Pescadore Islands and the Manchurian Peninsula being subjected to Japanese control. In a contest for control of

the Manchurian Peninsula the Japanese Navy destroyed the Russian Navy in 1905 and gained the 1,350 Kurile Islands and the southern half of Sakhalin Island which virtually closed off Russian access to the Pacific Ocean. China's weakness can be found in the fact that the parties invited by Teddy Roosevelt to the peace conference in Portsmouth, Maine ending the Russo-Japanese War and awarding control of Chinese territory did not include China! Korea was formally annexed to the Empire in 1911. MEIJI's forty-four year period of rule ended with his death in 1912; he was

succeeded by EMPEROR TAISHŌ (also known by his common name of YOSHIHITO) who expanded the Empire with British money and German territory: the German protectorate of New Guinea included the island groups of the Marshalls, the Pelews, the Carolines and the German-Marianas (Saipan and Tinian) plus, on the mainland, China's Shandong peninsula fell under Japan's control in 1917. TAISHŌ died in 1926 and HIROHITO became the third EMPEROR of the fifty-eight-year-old Greater Japanese Empire upon his ascension to the Lotus Throne. The rapid growth of the military not only created the Empire but also controlled the Imperial house.



EMPEROR PŪYÍ



SUN YAT-SEN



CHIANG  
KAI-SEK



MAO ZEDONG

By the 1930s China had been convulsed by civil war for two decades. The former Chinese Empire had been governed by the Manchurian QING dynasty since 1616. In 1912 China's last EMPEROR, the 6-year-old PŪYÍ, known to Westerners as HENRY, was forced to abdicate.

The Republic of China was born 15 years prematurely with SUN YAT-SEN (1866 – 1925) at the helm in 1912. HENRY nominally remained EMPEROR, being held captive in the Forbidden City with an annual income of \$4-million, paid by the U.S., until he was evicted in 1924.

A semblance of a Chinese nation emerged with CHIANG KAI-SEK (1887 – 1975) at the helm of a Nationalist Party with U.S. support by the end of the 1920s. KAI-SEK spent much of the next decade trying to eliminate the internal threat of the Communist Party of MAO ZEDONG (1893 – 1976) before realizing the external Japanese threat was much greater and could only be answered by a combined Nationalist-Communist response.<sup>1</sup>



Henry, Emperor of Manchuguo

In 1931 Japan created the puppet state of *Manchuguo* after conquering all of Manchuria. Japan sought recognition of their puppet as the true China, going so far as to install the last Chinese Emperor as ruler in 1932. Japan's second full-fledged invasion of China began in August 1937 with Shanghai falling after just two months.

Tensions between Japan and the U.S. were on the rise: the American gunboat *USS Panay* was anchored in the Yangzi River just off Nanking in December 1937 to provide refuge for American diplomats fleeing the "rape of Nanking" being visited on "the Southern capital." On the 12<sup>th</sup> of that month, Japanese dive-bombers targeted and sank the ship. This triggered a massive expansion of the U.S. Pacific Fleet which was seen, by Japan, as a military aggression, or, at least, a prelude to one.

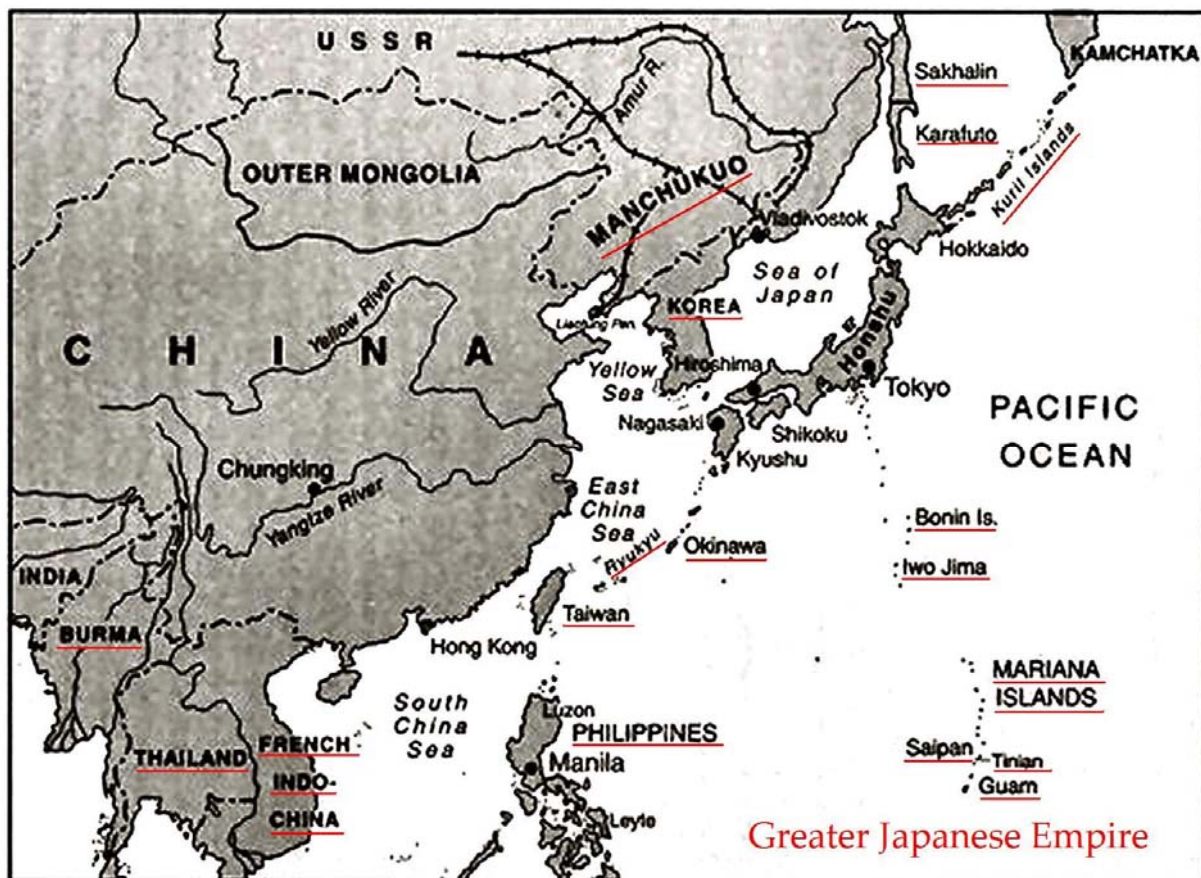
The U.S. adopted the *Open Door* policy calling for free trade and, basically, a capitalistic society. In November 1938 Japan announced its own policy: the *New Order in East Asia*: Japan



controlled everything and no foreigners allowed. Japan military growth required massive amounts of imports of all sorts with fuel being a primary concern. In an effort to rein-in the ever-expanding *Empire of the Rising Sun*, the United States placed an embargo on all fuel shipments to Japan, viewed as yet another “act of war” by the growing Empire.

By the time the U.S. entered the Southeast Asian theater of war, China’s entire coast had fallen to Japan and what remained of the interior was split between the Nationalist and Communist Armies. With blinders firmly in place, the U.S. threw millions at KAI-SEK, and millions more when nothing happened. While the bank accounts of KAI-SEK and his buddies grew fat, the popularity and military strength of ZEDONG grew strong. Even after the blinders were removed, millions more continued to flow into the private bank accounts of KAI-SEK and his wife SOONG MEI-LING (1898 – 2003, MADAME KAI-SEK, attended a private elementary school in N.J!).

We are all familiar with the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor – an attack planned, as we have been led to believe, to follow a declaration of war by Japan on the United States but, as events would have it – a peace-time attack that would be the ruin of Japan. The truth is that three months *before* the attack, the decision was made to deliver the formal declaration of war in Washington, DC *after* Pearl Harbor had been hit. Coincidentally, FDR had given the go-ahead for aggressive development and deployment of an atomic bomb on 6 December 1941, the day before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.<sup>2</sup> On December 8<sup>th</sup> the U.S. declared war on Japan. By the end of 1942 Japan controlled Burma, the Philippines, French Indo-China, the Shepherd and Solomon Islands, the Bismark Archipelago, Gilbert Island and Tarawa, Malaya and the

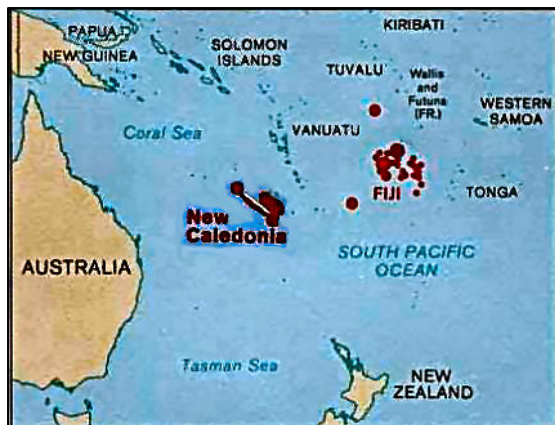


Dutch East Indies – virtually all the island groups north of the equator plus all the coast of the Asian continent from India to the Soviet Union. They also occupied two Aleutian Islands – Attu and Kiska – in early 1942. Japan refused to agree to the terms of the Geneva Convention and the atrocities they committed were both inhumane and subhuman; they rarely took POW's – they decapitated, disemboweled and mutilated them – chopping off their hands & feet and then leaving them to bleed to death.

In December 1943 PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, PRIME-MINISTER WINSTON CHURCHILL and CHIANG KAI-SHEK issue the **CAIRO DECLARATION**: Japan would be reduced to only the islands in her possession prior to the 1894 and abandon their puppet-state of *Manchuguo*. Only when that happened would military operations stop.

This was the turbulent South Pacific seas that Valentine sailed into in April 1944. First stop: **New Caledonia**. Lying east of Australia, *New Caledonia* was one of the South Seas islands under French control.

When the French capitulated to Nazi Germany by forming the puppet Vichy government in June 1940, all their territories followed, at least initially. The island's population felt differently and installed their own Free-French government in September 1940; the Vichy officials fled to French Indochina. The U.S. assumed control of the island in December 1941 with military forces arriving in March 1942; several airstrips were operational almost immediately. Measuring some 250 miles north-to-south and 31 miles east-to-west *New Caledonia* is one of the largest islands in the Pacific. Its capital of *Nouméa* became headquarters for the U.S. Navy and Army in the South



Kai-sek, FDR & Churchill at the Cairo Conference

Pacific. It still remains a French territory. Dad spent a few months here in spring 1944 before heading to *Fiji*. In February 1943 U.S. forces secured Guadalcanal, guaranteeing safe transport to allied bases in the South Pacific and in May the Japanese forces in the Aleutian Islands were expelled.

The U.S. military campaigns had specific goals – to allow for a new class of large, long-range bombers to bomb mainland Japan from U.S. air bases. These bases required extremely long runways – up to two miles in length – and the only option was to retake *Guam* and capture *Saipan* and *Tinian*.

With this in mind, the U.S. hopped and skipped its way closer and closer to Japan, taking *Kwajalein* in February 1944 which became the launch pad for the invasion of the *Marianas* in summer 1944. The military relied on the B-29 Super Fortress, using the B-32 Dominator as a back-up despite its shorter range. The plan to win the war in the Pacific had been conceived before war was even declared and it required the Super Fortress for it to work. In turn, the B-29



required runways almost two miles long and over 150' wide for the huge wingspan and sturdy enough not crumble under its mammoth weight – sixty tons when loaded. A specific few B-29s would also have to be able to go into a steep, 158° diving turn immediately after dropping its single bomb so as to gain the maximum possible distance from detonation.

The islands of *Saipan* and *Tinian* had been a Japanese protectorate since the end of the First World War. *Tinian* and *Saipan* are the two largest of the fifteen islands that make up the *U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands*. The largest island, *Guam*, not part of the *Commonwealth*, had been the only U.S. territory in the region, lying about fifty miles south since 1898 when Spain lost it, along with the *Philippines* and *Puerto Rico*, in the Spanish-American War. Japan conquered this sole U.S. territory on 8 December 1941, the day following their attack on Pearl Harbor. *Saipan*, somewhat larger than *Tinian*, lies across the three-mile-wide Saipan Channel north of *Tinian*. The U.S. Marines invaded the *Marianas* early in July 1944

With *Saipan* secure, all eyes turned three miles south to *Tinian* the smallest of the *Marianas* to be conquered. Tinian's population was (and remains) *Tinian Town* (now *San Jose Village*) on the shores of Sunharon



Bay on the southwest coast. The island only measures some 12 miles north-to-south and 3 miles east-to-west at its widest point, resembling Manhattan in shape and size. The terrain is generally flat with a gentle upward slope toward the island's centrally located paired peaks of Maga (440 ft) and Mount Lasso (564 ft). The highest peak (584 ft, noted as "ET 5 Tini" on topographical maps) is found on the southeast coast paired with San Hila (495 ft). These are the tops of an ancient volcano that extends more than six miles from the bottom of the Marianas Trench.



*Tinian* was secured by the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, except for about 500 non-combative Japanese who hid in caves for the rest of the war (and, for at least one, well beyond). They would spy on the Americans from the mountain peaks at dusk, not for strategic information, but to see where the garbage was tossed. There was no food, they were starving, and the American refuse was their only food source. Japanese soldier MURATA SUSUMU was an enemy combatant captured, *in 1953*, after he was found still hiding in a small shack near a swamp at the southern end of *Tinian*; another Japanese soldier would be found in hiding on *Guam* in 1973! Lying three miles off the southern edge of *Tinian*, across *Tinian Channel*, is the tiny island of *Aguijan* which held a Japanese garrison until the end of the war. Japan would attack *Saipan* and *Tinian* repeatedly until January 1945.

Within the first year of American occupation of



*Tinian*, the world's largest airfield complex was ready. North Airfield had four B-29 runways and was home to the 313<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing (180 B-29s); West Airfield had two B-29 runways, two 8,500' runways and a 5,000 foot fighter runway and was home to the 58<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing (another 180 B-29s). *Tinian*, roughly the size of Manhattan, adopted names from the latter: Broadway, 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 42<sup>nd</sup> Street etc. *Central Park*, between the two airfields, held the base hospitals; *Greenwich Village*, at West Airfield, housed the 58<sup>th</sup>; while *Harlem*, at North Airfield, housed the 313<sup>th</sup>. Its strategic location became evident when the first high-altitude B-29 run on Tokyo launched from *Tinian* on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November, 1944. Today the north field has been reclaimed in large part by overgrowth while West Airfield now serves as Tinian International Airport. In recent years a growing tourist industry has emerged around the town of *San Jose*.

In February 1945, North Airfield on *Tinian* was selected as the site for *Silver plate*, the most famous bomb run in history. *Tinian* was selected over *Guam* as it was eighty miles closer to Japan; its small size made it easier to hide the project; it had the airfields required to launch an attack; *Guam* and *Saipan* had deep-water harbors that were needed by U.S. forces; and lastly, in the event of an accident, civilian and military casualties would be the lowest.

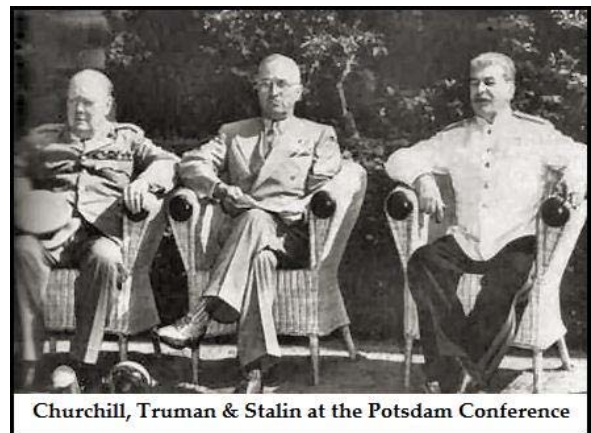
On 26 July 1945 PRESIDENT HARRY TRUMAN, PRIME-MINISTER WINSTON CHURCHILL and CHIANG KAI-SHEK issue the **POTSDAM DECLARATION**:

**We – the President of the United States, the President of the National Government of the Republic of China, and the Prime Minister of Great Britain ... call upon the government of Japan to proclaim now the unconditional surrender of all Japanese armed forces, and to provide proper and adequate assurances of their good faith in**

**such**

**The**

**alternative for Japan is prompt and utter destruction.**



Churchill, Truman & Stalin at the Potsdam Conference



Little Boy

We know the response of the United States was to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima (Little Boy on 6 August) and Nagasaki (Fat Man on 9 August). There are many little-known facts surrounding this decision. Japan was on the verge of surrendering and the U.S. was well-aware of that fact. The first bomb may have been dropped to get Japan to surrender before the Soviet Union declared war; what it did was to cause the Soviet Union to void its neutrality pact with Japan and declare war on August 8<sup>th</sup>. On the date of the Japanese surrender only two preliminary reports on the



atomic weapons. He did voice his opinion on the subject to me by stating ‘We should’ve gone on to bomb Moscow too.’ Gee whiz, if that’s how you treat an ally, what would you do to an enemy?

On 15 August 1945 Japan finally surrenders. Japanese citizens are stunned as they listen to their EMPEROR state “*the war situation has developed not necessarily to Japan’s advantage.*” The document of surrender is signed on 2 September 1945 aboard the *USS Missouri* in Tokyo Bay. A similar ceremony occurs two days later near *Tinian* when 2ND LIEUTENANT. KINICHI YAMADA surrenders the *Aguijan Island* garrison to REAR ADMIRAL MARSHALL GREER.



EMPEROR HENRY was imprisoned by Chinese Communists for most of the 1950s for “reeducation.” He lived in Peking where he resumed a limited political career in 1964 and worked as a gardener until his death in 1967.

HIROHITO continued as EMPEROR until his death in 1989. CHAPTER 1, ARTICLE 1 of the JAPANESE CONSTITUTION of November 1946 states:

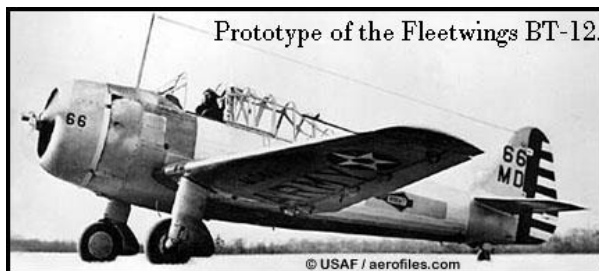
THE EMPEROR SHALL BE THE SYMBOL OF THE STATE  
AND OF THE UNITY OF THE PEOPLE,  
DERIVING HIS POSITION FROM THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE  
WITH WHOM RESIDES SOVEREIGN POWER

PART I: PRIVATE VALENTINE WILLIAM SMITH, United States Army

June 1942	Graduates Trenton High School
July – October 1942	Employed by Fleetwings, Bristol, PA
September 1942 – August 1943	Student at Rutgers, Trenton, NJ
October 1942 – 1943	Works for Navy at Eastern Aircraft, Ewing, NJ
December 1942	Enlists, U.S. Army; deferred until September 1943
September – November 1943	Basic Training, Camp Crowder in Neosho, MO
November 1943 – March 1944	Signal Corps School, Fort Monmouth, NJ
January – March 1944	Central Office Repairman class
March – April 1944	Camp Beale, Pittsburg, California
April – July 1944	New Caledonia
July 1944 – March 1945	Suva, Fiji Islands
March 1945 – February 1946	Tinian, Marianas Islands

VALENTINE WILLIAM SMITH started high school when he entered the tenth grade at Trenton High School in September 1939. That same month saw the start of the Second World War with the Nazi invasion of Poland. "BILLY" graduated from Trenton High in June 1942. The following month he started working for Fleetwings, Incorporated, an aircraft manufacturer in Bristol, Pennsylvania.

Fleetwings was born when several members of the DEGANAH family incorporated their family-held business in 1929. Starting out in Garden City, New York as a manufacturer of stainless-steel aircraft parts, it expanded operations by making components for other aircraft manufacturers such as the Ireland Aircraft



Company and Grover-Loening Aircraft Company. In 1934, after a brief tenancy in a hangar at the Lower Roosevelt Airfield on Long Island, the company purchased the former Keystone Aircraft facility, located on the Delaware River in Bristol, PA. Between 1939 and 1942 the company built the BT-12, the first all-stainless steel military training airplane. During 1941, Fleetwings

built a new factory on Green Lane at the nearby Kaiser Airport and it was in this facility that VALENTINE probably worked. While there the company was undoubtedly working on the XBQ-1, the forerunner of today's guided missiles.





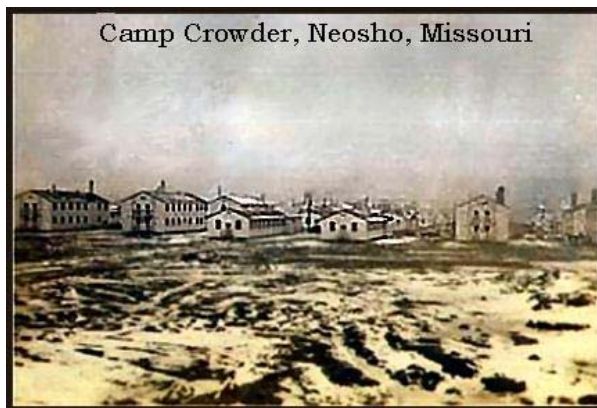


VALENTINE remained at Fleetwings a short time, taking a position with the Eastern Aircraft division of General Motors Corporation in October 1942. General Motors completed the conversion of their Ternstedt Automobile plant in Ewing Township for production of the Navy Avenger Torpedo Bomber in September of that year. He was not employed by G.M. but by the U.S. Civil Service and worked under the supervision of U.S.

Navy Inspectors. He was lead-member of a 5-man quality control team that inspected the TBM-1s coming off the assembly line.

In the fall of 1942 he enrolled in the Radio Technician (Radio Theory and Repair) program at Rutgers University, taught at the University Extension Campus in Trenton. He completed the two courses on 4 August 1943.

He enlisted in the United States Army on 14 December 1942 and entered the Signal Corps on 10 January 1943. His was not “active duty” at first but he may have drawn full pay while a Rutgers student. He was called up for active service on 4 September 1943 just after receiving his Radio Technician certificate

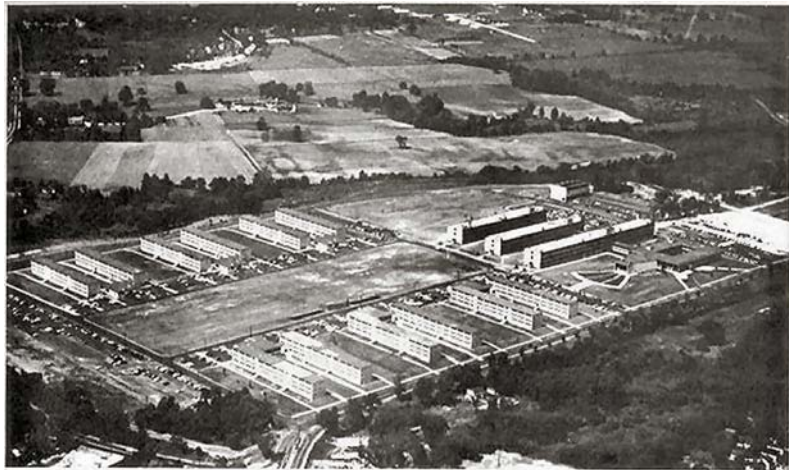


Basic training is usually a sixteen-week endeavor; VALENTINE’S was finished in just eight. For this abbreviated basic training, he was sent to Camp Crowder in Neosho, Missouri, near Joplin. This Camp had been established in 1941 as an ARMORED TRAINING CENTER but was re-designated as a SIGNAL CORPS TRAINING CENTER for the U.S. Army in late 1942 or early 1943. The “basic training” he received was characterized as being one that was minimal. It seems the military superiors had

decided that these were men whose anticipated positions did not warrant the full basic training program. The anticipated positions were important enough to the success of the war effort that their basic training was halved.



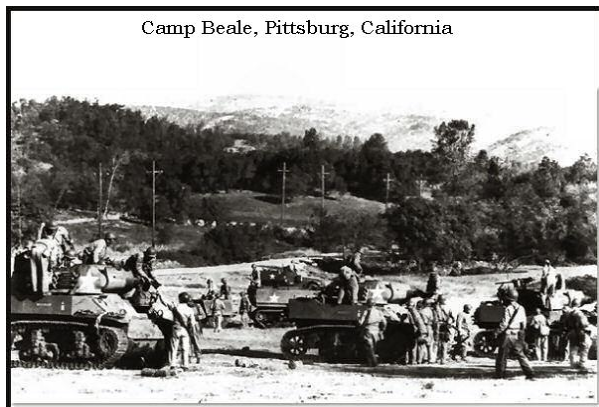
Completing the abbreviated basic training in November 1943 PRIVATE SMITH was transferred to the EASTERN SIGNAL CORPS TRAINING CENTER at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. The CENTER had an Officers' School (OS), an Officer Candidate School (OCS), an enlisted school as well as a basic training school. The last of these schools was probably not in operation in September 1943 as there would have been no reason for VALENTINE to be transferred to Camp Crowder for basic training.



Eastern Signal Corps Training Center  
Myer Hall complex from the West. This view shows the West Gate of Fort Monmouth and its location on New Jersey Highway 35.

Continuing his studies at the SIGNAL CORPS SCHOOL, he became a Central Office Repairman when the fourteen-week course he enrolled in ended in March 1944. Fort Monmouth had made several significant discoveries that would benefit many areas in the future by 1944: the forerunner of radar was developed there by researchers in 1937 followed by the first machines using radar to accurately determine weather patterns in a decade later; other innovations include the manufacture of synthetic quartz crystals as well as the creation of the integrated circuit – without both, we would not have computers today. In 2005 the Department of Defense recommended the closure of Fort Monmouth as a military facility with all personnel transfers expected to be completed in 2011, however the site will continue to serve the country as the Department of Veteran's Affairs has opened on the site.

PRIVATE SMITH was shipped to Camp Beale in Pittsburg, California during March



Camp Beale, Pittsburg, California

1944. Camp Beale is located in northern California about 10 miles east of the towns of Marysville and Yuba City and about 40 miles north of Sacramento. Despite spending just a few weeks there, he visited Sacramento at least once and he may have struck up a short relationship while there as indicated by a set of four pictures (3 pictured here) he kept his whole life, the man notoriously not attached to remembrances of the past.



March 1944, Valentine Smith, "Clair, Olga," Hugh Clinton



March 1944, near Camp Beale, CA



March 1944 near Camp Beale, 40 miles north of Sacramento, CA

These pictures are all that remain to attest to PRIVATE SMITH'S last days in the United States before being shipped out to the South Pacific. He did not identify the woman pictured here but she may have been "OLGA" pictured in front of California's Capitol Building in Sacramento.

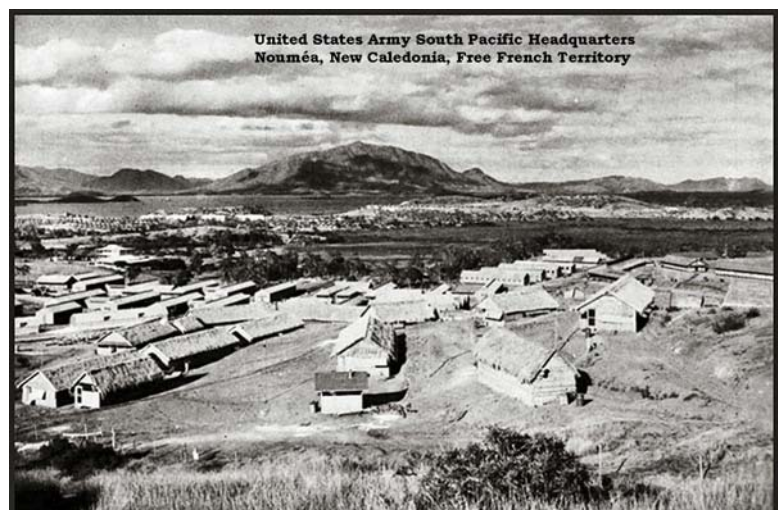


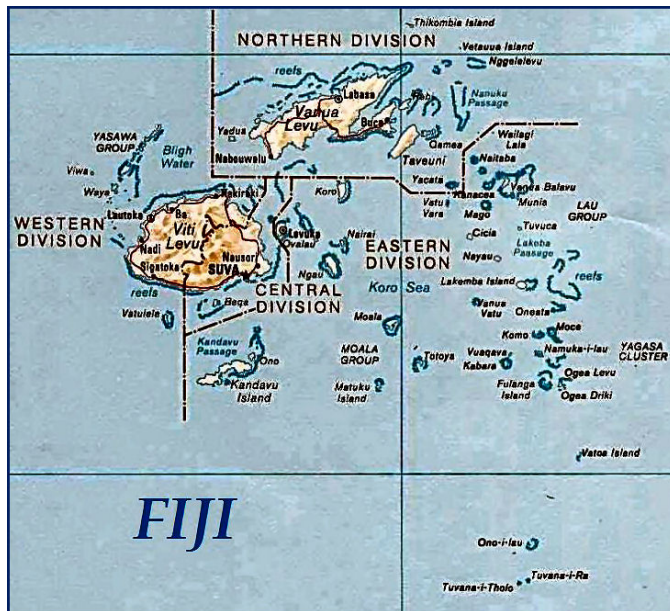


PRIVATE SMITH left for the South Pacific on 5 April 1944, arrived 15 days and 6,200 miles later and served in *New Caledonia*, *Fiji* and *Tinian*. The transport he sailed on has not been identified but it would have been quite similar to the one pictured here.



He spent about two months on *New Caledonia*, attached to "COMPANY A" of the 3119<sup>th</sup> SIGNAL SERVICE BATTALION according to Dad's writing on the photograph though this is not reflected in his military records.





In July 1944 he was transferred from COMPANY A to COMPANY B and posted to the *Fiji Islands*, a British protectorate that gained independence in 1970. Located several hundreds of miles east of *New Caledonia*; he was stationed at *Suva* for eight months working as a teletype mechanic with a grade of "Technician, 4th Class". His duties included the installation, inspection, maintenance and repair of all types of teletype machines: receiving, transmitting and relay units and their related auxiliary equipment.<sup>3</sup>



Little did he know that half a world away his older brother Jack had barely escaped death when his B-24 crash landed at Torretto Airfield in Italy.

In addition to his duties with the Signal Service, he continued to expand his combat expertise as well and on 20 January 1945, VALENTINE SMITH, PRIVATE FIRST-CLASS, was qualified to operate a carbine.

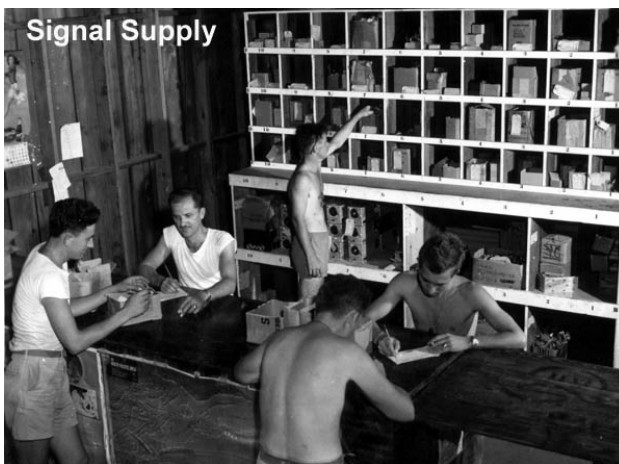
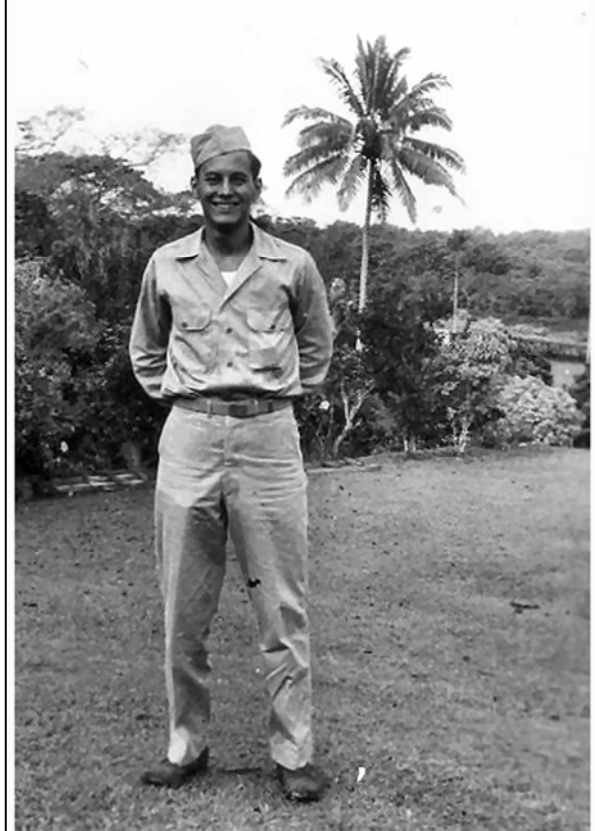




Private V.W. Smith, Technician, 4th Class, 3119th Signal Battalion  
Suva, Fiji Islands, second half of 1944



Pvt. V.W. Smith, Suva, Fiji Islands, 1944

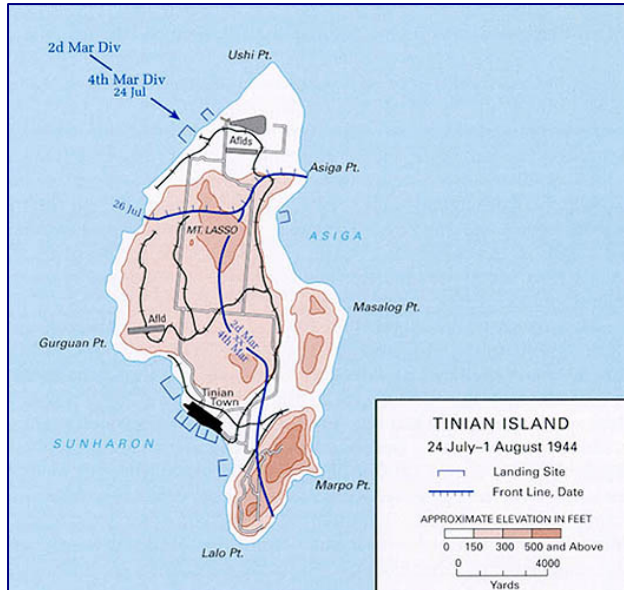


The 3910<sup>TH</sup> SIGNAL SERVICE CORPS was constituted on 16 December 1944, activated 1 February 1945 at *New Caledonia* and was ready to move by mid-March.

The 3910<sup>TH</sup> was created when COMPANY B of the 3119<sup>th</sup> was disbanded.<sup>4</sup> The 3910<sup>TH</sup> had been a topic of discussion within the War Department since mid-1943, with seemingly special attention given to this unit. Only the 146 enlisted men and 9 officers of the 3119<sup>th</sup>'s COMPANY B comprised the new company

which was made up of ten separate elements.<sup>5</sup> One element was the nine-man TELETYPE TEAM that had no officers. Considering that VALENTINE was a teletype mechanic, logic dictates that he was on this TEAM.

As the 3910<sup>th</sup> was being activated, its destination was decided upon – *Tinian*. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 1945 the 155 men of the newly-activated 3910<sup>th</sup> sailed for *Tinian* on the Liberty-type Crator-class cargo ship *U.S.S. Sabik*. The assignment to NEW CALEDONIA ISLAND COMMAND was terminated on the day the *Sabik* sailed and the unit was assigned to HEADQUARTERS ARMY GARRISON FORCE at *Tinian* when the *Sabik* reached its destination. Personnel records do not indicate that VAL had returned to *New Caledonia* from the *Fiji Islands* while military command records state the *Sabik* sailed from *New Caledonia*, perhaps it sailed from *New Caledonia* to the *Fiji Islands* continuing on to *Tinian*; in any event, the 2,000-mile trip took over two

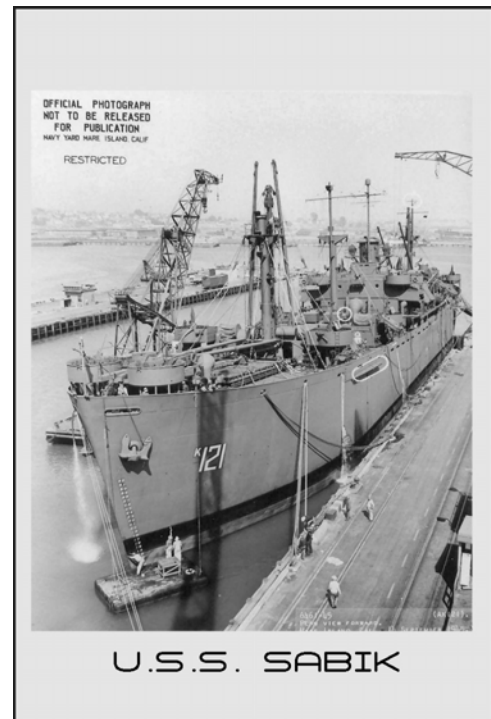


weeks, the same length of time to cover distances that were three times greater. The conjectured route given above may be the explanation for the time frame; they arrived at *Tinian* on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 1945.<sup>6</sup>



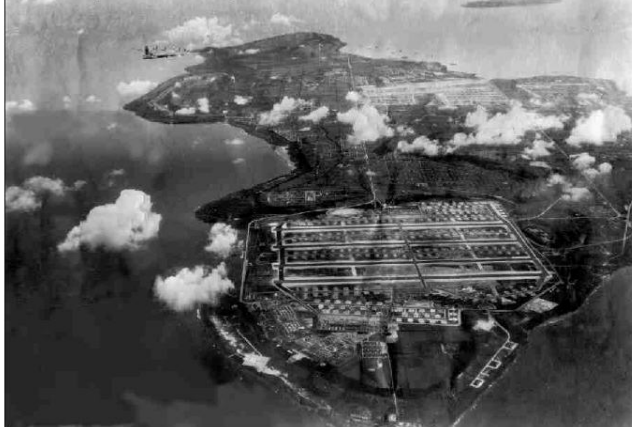
**Above:** Tinian Island

**Below:** Tinian harbor





Aerial view of Tinian looking south. North Field is in foreground while West Field complex lies in background



Tinian, West Air Field

The "Px"



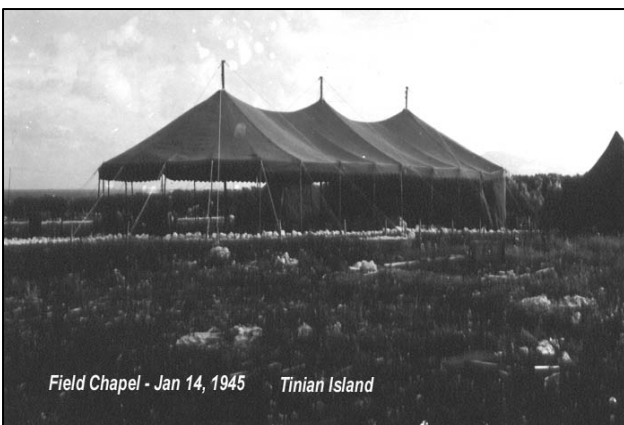
Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) Club



Red Cross Canteen



Field Chapel - Jan 14, 1945 Tinian Island



Mess Hall

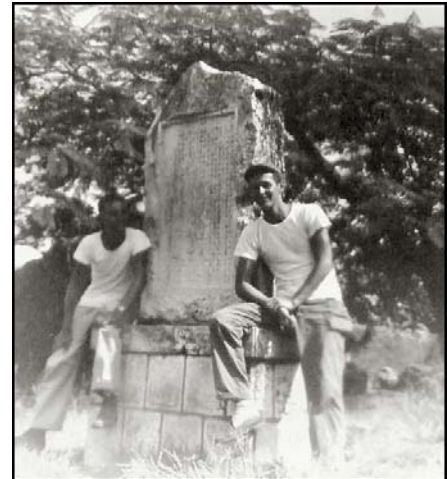




But all was not work  
apparently:

He visited prehistoric  
ruins with "MACCONNEL."

AND



Penned the following under the *nom de plume*  
"POET LARIOT OF JOISEY"

*Through this shop where the good man works,  
Pass five men who are plain jerks.  
They're dumb but healthy and mostly fat,  
There a lack of work makes them grow like that.*

*First there's one called Sargeant Katz.  
I think that he is slightly bats.  
He plays around with radio and tube  
And works just like a first class rube.*

*The next one's name is Donald Fast,  
He looks as if he's slightly gassed.  
As you can see, he's just a hick  
Big and dumb, and plenty thick.*

*And then there's one named Robert Pinnick  
Who should be in a psycho-clinic.  
He's big and strong just like a bull.  
Too bad he thinks just like a mule.*

*And now we come to K.L. Martin  
With that big, broad stomach he's always cart-in',  
He's the one who hardly eats  
But when he sits he needs four seats.*

*The last man of this gruesome five,  
Is one who's only half alive.  
No other human like he could be  
--- this character called Moriarty.*

*That's the end of my story  
That's all I'll tell ---  
But I wish these guys would go to hell.*



Besides illuminating a side of Dad rarely seen – the names may be five of the nine members of the Teletype Team: MORIARTY, K.L. MARTIN, ROBERT PINNICK, DONALD FAST and SERGEANT KATZ (with Dad being a sixth). However, none of these names appears on any of VAL's personal photographs; those names include DALE DAVIS and "McCONNELL." Studying available maps it seems the Teletype Team was probably housed just north of the West Airfields but this has not been verified.

All 155 members of the 3910<sup>TH</sup> SIGNAL SERVICE CORPS received the **MERITORIOUS SERVICE UNIT PLAQUE** for unspecified outstanding performance between 30 March and 3 October 1945 as found in General Order 133, Western Pacific Base Command dated 1 November 1945 by "Command of BRIGADIER GENERAL COLLADAY." The General Order gives no reason for the award. Individual members of the unit, by virtue of the specifics governing this award, received the **MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION**. It is thought the activities may have been connected to the missions that dropped the first atomic bombs. The General Order makes similar awards to a total of twenty units but the 3910<sup>th</sup> is singular in the location of *Tinian* (16 awarded for performance on *Saipan*, 2 on *Guam* and 1 on *Peleliu*). The 3910<sup>th</sup> is the only SIGNAL SERVICE COMPANY to receive the award.<sup>7</sup>



The 3910<sup>TH</sup> was *relieved* from being assigned to HEADQUARTERS ARMY GARRISON FORCE and then *assigned* to the 3117<sup>TH</sup> SIGNAL SERVICE BATTALION from 4 October 1945 to 10 March 1946, while remaining *attached* to HEADQUARTERS ARMY GARRISON FORCE. *Relieved* from the 3117<sup>th</sup> assignment, the 3910<sup>th</sup> was *assigned* again to HEADQUARTERS ARMY GARRISON FORCE until it was inactivated the following month. The difference between being *assigned to* versus being *attached to* HEADQUARTERS ARMY GARRISON FORCE is not known but, undoubtedly, whoever was responsible for the unit's payroll, history and other records *did* know as that person probably changed when an *assignment* became an *attachment* and vice-versa. Almost immediately after victory, the 3910<sup>th</sup> started shipping the enlisted men stateside: 9 in September, 14 in October, 31 in December, 41 in January and 28 in February. VALENTINE was one of the 28 when he embarked on an eleven-day ocean crossing to the west coast of the United States on 13 February 1946. The few remaining men soon followed: 4 in March and the last 12 in April 1946. The unit itself was inactivated on 19 April 1946 at *Tinian* with the exit of 2 officers who remained on the island. In addition to the **MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION**, VALENTINE also received the **WORLD WAR II VICTORY MEDAL** & **GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL** & the **ASIATIC PACIFIC SERVICE MEDAL**.<sup>8</sup>



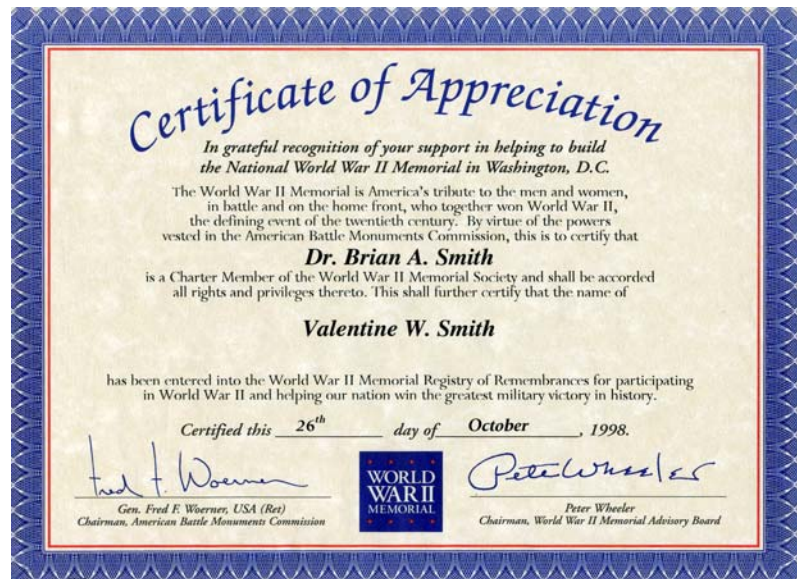
The 3910<sup>TH</sup> would go through several changes that resulted in it being transferred from the SIGNAL SERVICE CORPS to the MILITARY INTELLIGENCE branch as the 3910<sup>TH</sup> SIGNAL SERVICE COMPANY headquartered at Philadelphia; it was redesignated as the 303<sup>RD</sup> SIGNAL SERVICE COMPANY in January 1948 and renamed the 303<sup>RD</sup> SIGNAL RADIO INTELLIGENCE COMPANY in September 1950. Another redesignation and name change came just a few months later when the 303<sup>RD</sup> became the 306<sup>TH</sup> COMMUNICATION RECONNAISSANCE BATTALION in January 1951, then the 306<sup>TH</sup> ARMY SECURITY AGENCY BATTALION in September 1956 and finally the 306<sup>TH</sup> MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION in February 1990. The unit was decommissioned at the end of 2005. The motto of the 306<sup>TH</sup> is “*NEMO VIGILANTIOR*” which means “*NO ONE MORE WATCHFUL*” but it is not known if this was inherited from the 3910<sup>th</sup> or not. The unit’s coat-of-arms, if not inherited from the 3910<sup>th</sup>, honors them visually in several ways. An online description of that insignia states:

*Teal blue and white are the colors formerly used for Army Security Agency battalions. The volcano symbolizes the area in the Pacific where the unit served. The black sphere charged with a white mullet alludes to the coat of arms of Captain Cook, who discovered New Caledonia, the island on which the unit was activated. The lightning flash refers to the mission of the unit and the orange color represents its former status as a signal company.*



The description continues with mention of a griffin, a lightning flash sword blade, a palm wreath and the colors red and gold – none of which appear on the coat-of-arms.

In 1998 PRIVATE VALENTINE SMITH’S WWII service was honored by being entered in the Registry of Remembrances of the National World War II Monument. That monument was completed and opened to the public in Washington, DC in May 2004.



To date I have not been able to find any reunion of the 3910<sup>th</sup> however the 3119<sup>th</sup> Signal Service Battalion (whose Company B formed the 3910<sup>th</sup>) has held at least one.<sup>9</sup>





## Part II: MRS. SMITH goes to Washington

Well, not exactly, MRS. SMITH had become MRS. GURLAVICH on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August in 1941, well before going to Washington – and would not become MRS. GURLAND until the war was over. Dad's older sister MARGARET was an early "Woman Marine" – the Marines are the infantry of the Navy – she served for over two years in Washington, D.C. after completing Basic Training at Camp LeJeune in New River, North Carolina; The (Trenton) *Sunday Times Advertiser* of 26 September 1943 notes that



"PETER GURLAVICH entered Navy on 26 November 1942 and is currently at naval supply depot in Trinidad. MARGARET sworn in as a private in the US Marine Corps Women's Reserve on 31 August 1943. Her basic training was at Camp Lejeune, and she worked in Washington, DC; graduate of THS and Rider College, employed by NJ State Unemployment Compensation Commission."<sup>10</sup>

Margaret was promoted to sergeant before she left the Marines on 7 August 1945.

Dad's older brother MICHAEL served in the ordnance division of the United States Army Air Force, stationed in Tennessee.

Dad's older brother JACK also served in the United States Army Air Force. He had wanted to be a pilot but he got air sick while flying at low altitude and washed out of pilot training at Smyrna, Georgia and instead became a bombardier. His riveting story takes place in the European theater and is recounted here before the telling of Dad's own odyssey through the South Pacific.



### 2<sup>ND</sup> LIEUTENANT JACK SMITH

The penultimate day of January, 1944 saw the birth of the 764<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, one of the four units of the 461<sup>st</sup> Bombardment Group. (The 765<sup>th</sup>, 766<sup>th</sup> & 767<sup>th</sup> rounded out the Group). The 461<sup>st</sup> was part of the 49<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing of the U.S. Army 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force, created 1 November 1943. In its first year of operation, the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force lost 1,700 fliers. Order number 295, dated 30 January 1944 and originating with the Air Transport Command of the Caribbean Wing's Headquarters Station # 11 at Morrison Field, created crew 18 to pilot the B-24 Liberator with serial number 41-28732 in which 2<sup>ND</sup> LIEUTENANT JOHN J. SMITH would be the bombardier. He graduated from the Bombardier School





in Big Spring, Texas. JACK'S wife MARYJANE gave the pilot a small, black toy lamb which hung in the cockpit; it was petted for "good luck" at the start of every mission.

Crew 18 was originally composed of:

Rank	First	Last	ID	Crew Position
2d Lt	Edgar M	Trenner	0807079	Pilot
2d Lt	William (NMI)	Paradise	0755748	Co-pilot
2d Lt	John J	Smith	0689489	Bombardier
2d Lt	Alphonse P	Markavitch	0811536	Navigator
S Sgt	Jesse J	Luke, Jr	18163034	Ast Engineer/Gunner
Sgt	James (NMI)	Affinito	32759678	Radio Oper/Gunner
S Sgt	Manuel (NMI)	Weber	13098927	Radio Oper/Gunner
Sgt	James J	Montalto	13113077	Ast Engineer/Gunner
Sgt	Edward D	Rose	12205996	Armor Gunner
1 <sup>st</sup> Lt	Earl M	Dewitt	0733413	X

The last two, ROSE & DEWITT had been replaced by B. BUSBY and A.D. SINCLAIR by the time the picture of the crew of the *Sweet Pea* was taken.



**Standing L-R:** JESSE J. LUKE, JR., EDGAR M. TRENNER, WILLIAM PARADISE, ALFRED P. 'CHAPPY' MARKAVITCH and JOHN J. SMITH;  
**Kneeling L-R:** MANUEL 'MANNIE' WEBER, JAMES AFFINITO, JAMES J. MONTALTO, B. BUSBY and A.D. SINCLAIR



**Above:** Nine flight crew members in front of #18, *Sweet Pea*

**Left:** 2<sup>ND</sup> LIEUTENANT JOHN J. SMITH

The 764<sup>TH</sup> SQUADRON included the following ships:

Ship#	Name	Disposition	Date	Replaced by
1.	War Eagle	CRashed	07/25/44	Male Box
2.	The One-Eyed Jack	TRANSF 98 <sup>th</sup> BG	02/29/44	
3.	Stinky	SBD	11/05/44	
4.	[not named]	CR (training)	02/10/44	
5.	Battle Crate	CR	07/03/44*	Miss Kay
6.	Mister. (period)	C/L	06/10/44	Bingo
7.	Lucky Seven	CR	07/22/44	
8.	Winona Belle	CR	07/25/44	Uninvited Guest
9.	Evil Weevil	SALvaged	02/11/45	Iggy
10.	Scrouch	TRANSF 47 <sup>th</sup> BW	02/28/44	
11.	Ol' Bird	SAL	06/20/45	Cherokee
12.	Lazy Lady	'lost'	07/25/44	
13.	Chippiedall	CR	06/11/44	Bubble Trouble
14.	El Pagliaccio "The Clown"			
15.	Nov Schmoz Ka Pop	CR	08/12/44	Miss Lace
16.	Hell's A Poppin'	CR	04/13/44	Myra G
17.	Red Ryder	TRANSF 451 <sup>st</sup> BG	02/28/44	
18.	Swee'Pea	CR	07/25/44	Lady Duzz

A personnel roster dated 18 January at Hammer Airfield does not list ships 12 or 14 while two other ships associated with the squadron not indicated as 'original' include:

19. Fertile Myrtle 'shot down' 07/08/44  
Holy Joe (number unknown, added June 45)

\*Battle Crate may have been with the 765<sup>th</sup>

Pictures of ships 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 9 are below.

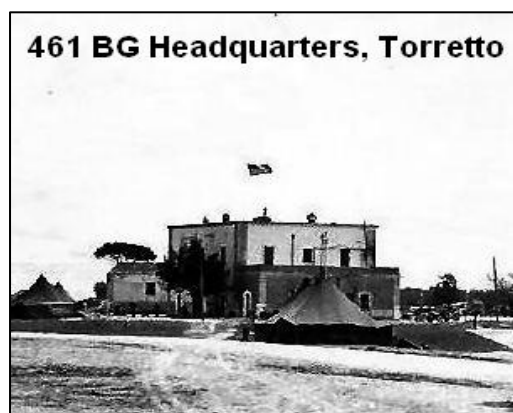


Pictures of ships 11 – 15 and 19 are below.



Better known today as Palm Beach International Airport, Morrison Field opened in 1936. The inaugural flight was a DC-2 on Eastern Air Line's grueling 13 ½ hour (!) Miami to New York itinerary with 12 (!! ) stops, the first being Morrison Field. With the outbreak of hostilities in Europe, the United States military prepared for war and assumed control of Morrison Field in November 1940.

On the opposite coast, at Hammer Field near Fresno, California, the 461<sup>st</sup> and 484<sup>th</sup> of the 49<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing had reoriented to become a heavy bombardment unit in December 1943, preparing it to command the B-24 Liberator heavy bomb groups of the 15<sup>th</sup> Army Air Force. The four squadrons of the 461<sup>st</sup> Group moved from California to Florida in January 1944 in anticipation of joining the European theater of war. By this time four of the original ships were gone: #4 crashed during training on 10 February, #9 (*Evil Weevil*) was salvaged the following day and was replaced by *Iggy*, while two were transferred to other units on 28 February – *Scrounch* (#10) and *Red Ryder* (#17). The next month the 49<sup>th</sup> Wing was deployed to Bari on the Adriatic coast in southern Italy. The 461<sup>st</sup> was based at Torretto Airfield near Bari beginning on 20 February 1944.







The Swee' Pea was flown from Palm Beach to Torretto by its flight crew rather than using a transport crew.

### MISSIONS OF THE 764TH

The freshman mission in which the 764<sup>th</sup> participated was on 2 April 1944 when 35 ships of the 461<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group Mission dropped 61.5 tons of fragmentation bombs on the railroad yard in Bihac, Yugoslavia. In the excitement of seeing their first action of the war and watching their bombs hit the targets, two B-24s collided and were lost.



Mission 13 23 April 1944 Bad Voslau Airdrome, Austria

Over the next few months targets included railroad yards and airfields in Italy, France, Austria, Yugoslavia and Romania, the Duna Tokol Aircraft Components Factory in Budapest, Hungary; several railroad bridges and viaducts in Italy; a submarine base at Toulon Harbor, France; and oil plants and storage facilities throughout Nazi-held territory and even within the borders of Nazi Germany. On the Swee' Pea's 13<sup>th</sup> mission, the radio man STAFF SERGEANT MANUEL WEBER was injured and lost the use of his right arm.

It would not be until 12 July 1944 that the 461<sup>st</sup> was hit by a significant force of enemy fighters. After bombing the railroad yard at Nimes, France 28 Luftwaffe fighters hit the last flight of six B-24s, downing four of them.

Uncle Jack recalled talking to his mother by phone shortly after completing a bombing run. During that call he told his mother he had just bombed his Dad's "hometown of Budapest." Well, at least he had the right country; his Dad was from Hosszu-Laz an insignificant suburb of Satoraljaujhely, some fifty-plus miles northeast of Budapest. He had two missions to Budapest: the first one on 13 April 1944 when the Duna Tokol Aircraft Components Factory was targeted and the second one on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July when the Rakos Railroad Yard was bombed; the one he was referring to could have been either. Since not every ship flew on every mission – the 69<sup>th</sup> mission of the 764<sup>th</sup> was flown on 25 July 1944 but this was only Uncle Jack's 50<sup>th</sup> mission.

**MISSION #69:**    25 July 1944    **Target:** Herman Goering Tank Works, Linz, Austria

*Here ends the story, and the life, of Swee' Pea*

The 764<sup>th</sup> experienced a long string of highly successful missions through out early summer 1944. That string wasn't just broken, it was shredded by disaster. A four flight formation of 21 ships from the 461<sup>st</sup> Group attacked the heavily defended Herman Goering Tank Works at Linz, Austria. Different sources give conflicting figures but over half of the B-24s were shot down or crashed. The worse figures have thirteen B-24s shot down and of the eight ships making it to base, two would be scrapped.

Just after the bomb bay doors had been opened and the formation had begun its bomb run, it was attacked by 150 enemy planes. Taking advantage of the fact that most of the planes flown by new crews did not have their ball turret down on the bomb run, the enemy came up under the lead flight of the formation and began throwing rockets through the open doors. The first plane down was the lead plane - #1 the *War Eagle*.

Instead of packing the formation in close, the inexperienced bomber pilots spread the formation. The Deputy Lead plane (#8 – *Winona Belle*), dropped their bombs and attempted to rally the formation. By this time, however, the fighters, still attacking low but now from the rear, picked off planes in the struggling formation. Eleven bombers were knocked down as parachutes, tracers, rockets, enemy fighters, and exploding bombers filled the air with confusion. The nose gunner on one of the crews which returned from the mission counted thirty two parachutes in the air at one time.

One source states that fifteen B-24s were lost: eleven shot down over the target and four more “were lost” on the mission – only six surviving to fly again. Another source mentions that twelve crews returned to base which would seem to indicate twelve ships, not eight, returning. Damage meted out to the enemy was significant: 31 fighters destroyed, 19 probably destroyed, and 9 damaged.

The *Swee' Pea* was seriously damaged: the wheels had been shot out and the



wing flaps, the brakes, were no longer functioning. The pilot, 1ST LIEUTENANT EDGAR M. TRENNER thought to use parachutes as substitute flaps (see photo at left). These were deployed when she hit the runway, with punctured tires, and they managed to slow the barreling ship enough to prevent a disaster. With too much damage to manage, the *Swee' Pea* washed out at Torretto Airfield.

A total of 113 officers and men went down on this mission. The usual crew has ten members so this number accounts for eleven ships lost. Sixteen men, seven officers and nine enlisted men, were flying their 50<sup>th</sup> sortie according to one source; the source states that fifteen of the sixteen men did not make it back to base - 1ST LIEUTENANT ERNEST R. HENRY was the exception. The number of missions that Uncle Jack completed has never been clear – one version has the *Swee' Pea* crashing on the 49<sup>th</sup> mission, one shy of the number required to be sent stateside for a "Buy US War Bonds" tour. An earlier, and possibly more accurate, version is found in the *Trenton Sunday Times Advertiser* of 10 September 1944. The article "Engaged to Wed Lt. John Smith" states JACK "has recently completed 50 missions." If the newspaper article is correct then Uncle Jack needs to be added to the total number of men returning to base after completing their 50<sup>th</sup> mission. The pilot, 2<sup>nd</sup> LIEUTENANT EDGAR TRENNER, stated in 2006 that *Swee' Pea* flew 47 missions.



For the first time the 461st Group turned back short of its target due to enemy fighters. Less than half of the twenty-one ships that flew the mission on 25 July 1944 remained at the end of the day: eleven, twelve or thirteen ships (depending on the source) were shot down during the mission and two more, including the *Swee' Pea*, were severely damaged and crash landed at their home field.



Combing through available records, I have identified eleven B-24s from the 461<sup>st</sup> BG that were downed by the enemy and *Swee' Pea* that crash landed at the base:

- 764<sup>th</sup> *War Eagle* (#1) suffered flak damage and crashed near *St. Peter i.d. Au.*  
*Winona Belle* (#8) crashed in a fighter attack over *Bad Zell.*  
*Lazy Lady* (#12) suffered flak damage, crashed near *St. Georgen a. Gusen.*  
*Swee' Pea* (#18) suffered flak damage and crash-landed at Torretto airfield
- 765<sup>th</sup> *Sleepy Time Gal* (#21) crashed near *Rechberg.*  
#23 crashed near *Luftenberg.*  
*Peace Maker* (#34) crashed near *Tragwein.*
- 766<sup>th</sup> #44 crashed after enemy attack near *Schwertberg.*
- 767<sup>th</sup> #61 in a fighter attack, crashed near *Hofkirchen i. Tr.*  
#66 suffered flak damage and crashed near *Molln.*  
#72 in a fighter attack, crashed near *Zeltweg.*  
#78 the Tail Dragon in a fighter attack, crashed near *Bad Zell.*

It is unclear what Uncle Jack did after the loss of *Swee' Pea* but it is clear what the 764<sup>th</sup> did – they designated a new #18 – the *Lady Duzz.*



### **THE VAGARIES OF WAR**

Our grandfather ALBERT MATELENA, knew that his father, GIUSEPPE, had a sister named CONCETTA living in the town of Alife. CONCETTA MADDALENA had married BERNARDO (FRANK) DEGNI on 27 November 1902 in Piedimonte d'Alife. CONCETTA and BERNARDO moved to the larger town of Alife, about twenty miles away.

As the Allies set their sites on mainland Italy as the first place for landing military forces on continental Europe in their push to destroy HITLER, they ascended the peninsula from the toe of Italy's boot northward to the German *Gustav Line* which ran from sea-to-sea across all of Italy, just north of Alife. The Nazi lynchpin in the *Gustav Line* was the well-defended mountain fortress of Monte Cassino. In preparation for the land forces advancing from the south, bombing runs would "soften" the enemy's position. One such target was Alife where, on 5 October 1943, Grandpop's 79-year-old AUNT CONCETTA became a civilian casualty of the war.

As the Allies drove the Germans north they built airfields to launch attacks in Nazi territory. Torretto Airfield near the Adriatic coast in southern Italy was operational in early 1944. The 461<sup>st</sup> and the 484<sup>th</sup> BGs were posted to Torretto from Hammer Field in Fresno, through Morrison Field in Palm Beach during February 1944 with missions starting in April.

### Part III – The Postwar Years

Dad would continue to be involved with the military until his retirement in 1979. Whether or not he realized this was his future while serving in the U.S. Army is a question that is unanswered. The choices he made not only affected his own life and that of his family; they had a much more far-reaching impact. From the creation of the earliest computers; to the aerospace programs of GEMINI, MERCURY and APOLLO; to our nation's defense through his time on Adak with the *Beartrap* project; from our omnipresent GPS system to the fire-retardant flight suit – he was a part of the latest & greatest of much that helped this country in the years following the Second World War.



In 1949 he enrolled in the electrical engineering program at Drexel Institute of Technology in Philadelphia. Between 28 January and 21 July he completed two terms.<sup>11</sup> The decade following the war was typical for many GI's – he got engaged, was married, bought a house in suburbia and started a family – the great American Dream.



#### [ASTRO-ELECTRONICS DIVISION OF RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA – PRINCETON, NJ](#)

In November 1962 VALENTINE started working for the Astro-Electronics Division (AED) of Radio Corporation of America (RCA). Located in Princeton, AED developed defense electronics products including some of the first computers. The Astro-Electronics Division was formed in 1958 under EDWARD C. HUTTER. It became one of the leading manufacturers of satellites and related systems. Located along Route 1 just north of Route 571 in Princeton,

the Division joined RCA Laboratories already on the site for a decade. But this was not the first time VAL was employed by RCA – he worked out of their Cherry Hill offices for the previous three years though the specifics of his job duties are unknown.

On 21 January 1963 he received "Secret" clearance from the Department of Defense through one of the forerunners of the Defense Industrial Security Clearance Office (DISCO) located in Columbus, Ohio. The most likely candidate was the Naval Investigative Service as it appears his projects were usually Navy ones. He would obtain another security clearance later through DISCO.

At this time AED was moving out of computer development, having turned over *Typhoon* to the Navy in 1952. *Typhoon* was the world's largest hybrid digital-analog computer and led the field in computer analysis and flight simulation. It was an F-shaped complex of some 50,000 tubes occupying nearly 10,000 square feet of floor space – and had almost infinitely less computing power than the standard home computer of today! While AED was his employer, it is likely that he wasn't always in

Princeton as RCA was frequently subcontracted by the government. VALENTINE stayed with AED through January 1968 (which was, coincidentally or not, the same year the Navy logged off of *Typhoon* for good) except for an almost-two-year stint with International Business Machines (IBM).

#### [International Business Machines – East Fishkill, NY](#)

Beginning in June 1964 he was at one of IBM's New York locations. I recall traveling to Poughkeepsie for a visit but on a later security clearance application, VAL listed East Fishkill as the site. East Fishkill is about twenty miles southeast of Poughkeepsie.

A highly-automated, specially-built plant in East Fishkill came online in 1963. There, IBM manufactured "Solid Logic Technology" (SLT) integrated circuits which were small, square ceramic modules with transistor chips and passive components mounted by pins. These consumed less power and space while offering faster speed and superior reliability compared to printed-circuit boards with packaged transistors. In fact VAL was probably at both sites as both were involved with production of SLTs.

Returning to AED in 1966, he stayed for two more years where a myriad of innovations and key technology such as transistors, color television, the electron microscope, CMOS based technology, Liquid Crystal Displays (LCDs), video cassette recorders, direct broadcast television, and high-definition television would be invented and developed during ensuing years. Since 1995 it has been a part of Lockheed Martin and is located in Sunnyvale, California.

While remaining a RCA employee, VAL transferred to a Navy Base, a transfer that would take him to the farthest extremes of this country.

#### [NAVAL AIR DEVELOPMENT CENTER – JOHNSVILLE, PA](#)



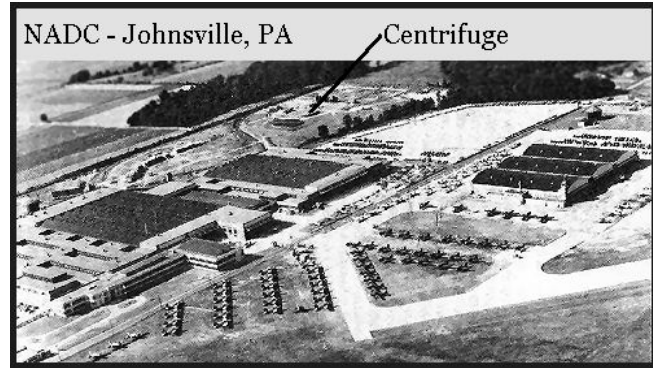
Exactly when his position with RCA took VAL to Johnsville, PA is not to be found in available records. Nor is it clear which one, or more, of the many Departments and Laboratories at Johnsville he was connected with. By the time he arrived, the NADC was the Navy's center for navigation for all aircraft, submarines and ships; they would employ 300 military and 2,600 civilian personnel by the 1970s.



However, the history of the Navy in Johnsville is clear:

1943: Navy Secretary established the *Naval Air Material Center* (NAMC), in the Fourth Naval District at Philadelphia with 4 sections:

1. *Naval Aircraft Modification Unit* (NAMU) relocates from Philadelphia to Johnsville, PA in November 1943; acquires Brewster Aircraft Corp which consisted of 734 acres in Bucks County, PA with production shops, administration spaces, an adjoining airfield and hangar spaces for NAMU. The task assigned to NAMU involved quantity conversion and modification of newly produced aircraft prior to delivery to the fleet for combat use. Development of guided missiles.
2. *Naval Air Experimental Station* (NAES), Philadelphia
3. *Naval Aircraft Factory* (NAF); and
4. *Naval Auxiliary Air Station* (NAAS)



1944: Bureau of Aeronautics requests NAMC study requirements for a laboratory to develop and test gas-turbine power plants which then becomes the *Naval Air Turbine Test Station* (NATTS) in Trenton, NJ; operates until 1967.

1947: NAMU becomes *Naval Air Development Station* (NADS) Johnsville, PA – with the *Pilotless Aircraft Development Lab* (PADL) being its major

function initially; responsibilities included the design and development of pilotless aircraft and target drones; operates until 1950.

1949: NADS renamed *Naval Air Development Center* (NADC) Johnsville, PA; designated along more functional lines - became principal Navy Research, Development, Test and Evaluation Center for Aircraft and aircraft systems in general that were tested in a domed, underground building. Dynamic Flight Simulator (Centrifuge) with 50' radius is built in Building 70, funded at \$2,381,000.00.





Mercury Astronaut training in Centrifuge - c1962

1950: **NADC**'s mission expanded and **PADL** was renamed the **Engineering Development and Services Department (EDSD)**. Through the 1950's with a staff of 400, the **EDSD** – known as **Everybody Does Something Different**– worked on ground and airborne control and instrumentation systems and other aircraft development projects; operates until 1958.

1950: **Aeronautical Computer Lab** (aka **Analytical and Computer Department, ACD**) established using RCA's Typhoon computer, world's largest hybrid digital-analog computer and leader in computer analysis and flight

simulation. Typhoon was a project of RCA, designed at the AED facility in Princeton, N.J.; it was the largest and fastest computer to date. After designing and building the Typhoon computer, RCA *reconsidered* its connection to the Navy and the Navy obtained Typhoon. It was not until the spring of 1952 that the transfer of Typhoon to **NADC** was completed. **NADC's Systems Engineering Division (SED)** conducted long-range research studies of the effectiveness of air weapons systems and the vulnerability of aircraft.

1952: **Center for Aviation Medical Physiology (CAMP)** established at **NADC**, later renamed the **Aviation Medical Acceleration Lab (AMAL)**; used centrifuge for simulations of X-15 rocket as it was capable of spinning a man to at least 16g. It was also the training site for all **MERCURY, GEMINI & APOLLO** astronauts.

1954: To coordinate and guide the extensive aeronautical research, development, and material activities of NAMC in the Fourth Naval District (Philadelphia, Johnsville, Trenton, and Lakehurst) the **Naval Air Development and Material Center (NADMC)** established at Johnsville, PA with REAR ADMIRAL S. B. SPANGLER, Commander.

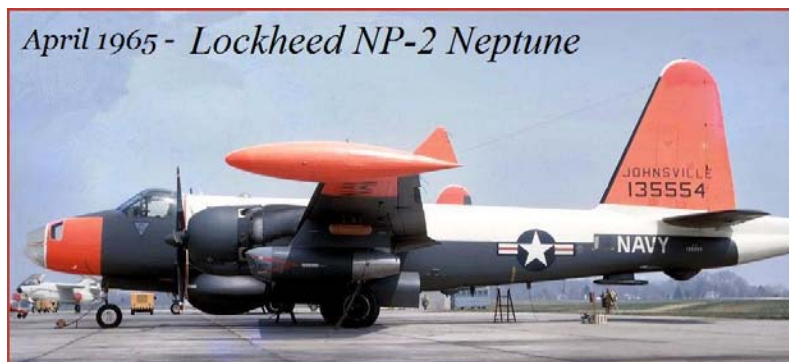
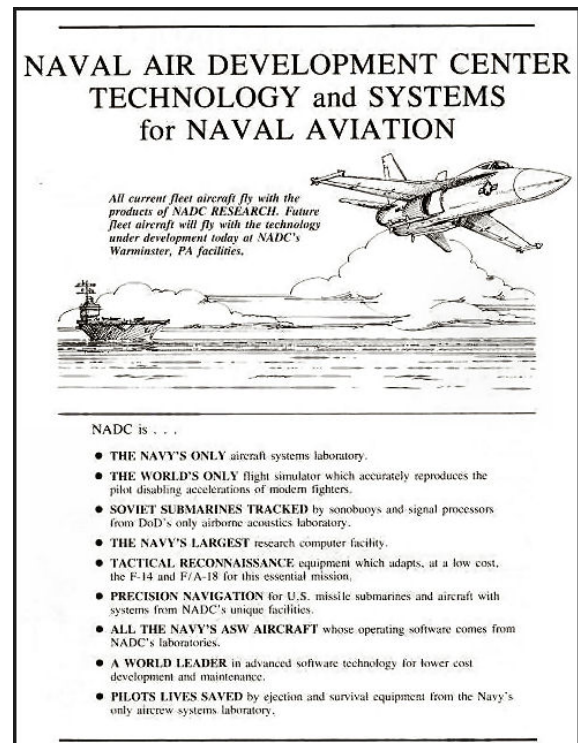
1954: **Aircraft Armament Lab (AAL)** conducted analytical studies of aircraft vulnerability operated until 1958 when its divisions were split between the **Air Warfare Research Department (AWRD)** and the new **Anti-Submarine Warfare Laboratory (ASWL)**.

Astronaut	Program	Aug 1959	April 1960	Oct 1960	Sept 1961	Aug 1962	July 1963
Scott Carpenter	Six Mercury Programs						
David Slayton							
Gordon Cooper							
Walter Shirra							
Alan B. Shepard	Just Prior to first suborbital flight						
John H. Glenn	Same as above, also April 1961						
Argo S. Grissom							
Walter D. Scott							
Frank Borman	Two Gemini Programs						
James A. Stafford	July 1963, Nov 1964						
Thomas P. Lovell Jr.							
See							
Walter F. Armstrong							
John Young							
James H. White Jr.							
Harold G. Conrad Jr.							
Bassett							
Chafee							
Aldrin							
Cunningham	One Apollo						
Bean	Nov 1964						
Anders							
Scott							
Eisele							
Schweickart							
Stepal							
Collins							
Gordon Jr.							
Cernan							
Williams							
Truly							



1955: In June the ACD was removed from the **NADC** and became the core of the *Air Warfare Research Department (AWRD)*, which developed many advanced weapons concepts, and carried out studies of the Fleet Ballistic Missile, the CORVUS missile, and the EAGLE missile, an early version of the Phoenix. The Computer Division carried out theoretical studies and simulations of aircraft and guided missile designs. With the departure of ACD's SED, the Computer Division became the *Aeronautical Computer Laboratory (ACL)*. In the late 1950's the Typhoon was broken down into components called Gales, and finally, in 1968, the Typhoon was completely dismantled. Five analogue computers replaced Typhoon and provided twice its capacity.

1958: When **EDSD's** shop facilities were transferred it was renamed the *Engineering Development Department (EDD)*, with a diverse mission.



1958: *Aeronautical Electronic and Electrical Labs (AEEL)* was created to develop undersea warfare work. Two divisions created by **AEEL** in April 1958, the *Sonar Division* and the *Special Methods Division*, were combined to form the core of the **ASWL** organized in the Fall of 1958; developed sonobuoys (*Julies*

and *Jezebels*; the former named after a stripper, Julie Gibson, dancing at The Wedge in Philly; the latter of Biblical fame) magnetic detectors, radar and laser techniques to find submarines.

1967: *Naval Air Propulsion Test Center (NAPTC)* created in **Trenton** by merger of Trenton's 43 year old **NATTS** and the Aeronautical Engine Laboratory of NAES of Philadelphia.

1996: **NADC** became part of *Naval Air Warfare Center (NAWC)* and Johnsville became Warminster.







1997: [NADC](#) closes on the last day of March; the runways were plowed under and the hangars torn down. Remaining structures house several businesses including Penn State University's [Applied Research Lab](#), the East Coast Recording Company, Bucks County morgue and crime lab senior citizens' housing complex, the North American Technology Center (an industrial park), the Warminster Community Park and a housing development.

June 2008: *Johnsville Centrifuge & Science Museum* established in the old Dynamic Flight Simulator Building with hopes for a restored centrifuge. The museum's mission is to preserve Warminster, Pennsylvania's unique contribution to the race to the moon.

Exactly what lab, section or division VAL was affiliated with at NADC is not known for sure. His unit measured the affects of vibration on some of the parts used in the defense and aerospace programs. The parts tested were probably computer-related ones such as motherboards. While at NADC he became involved with a project that would take him the most western extent of this country for a brief period in 1971. He would help set the bear trap on Adak, Alaska.



### **BEARTRAP – ADAK, ALASKA**

**Project Beartrap**, Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division, Naval Air Systems Command, NADC. The Naval Air Station (NAS) Adak encompassed approximately 76,000 acres. The northern portion of Adak Island was designated for military use by the US Navy in 1959; though no longer a military installation the military continues to have a strong presence. Beginning in the early 1940s, Adak became a key operations and supply location for United States military forces after the Japanese occupation of Kiska and Attu Islands during World War II. In 1957 the Navy called for design proposals for replacement for the aging Lockheed P-2 Neptune; the result was the P-3 Orion a more advance aircraft to conduct maritime patrol and antisubmarine warfare operations against submarines and surveillance of naval surface vessels of the former Soviet Union. Adak was and continues to be a major staging ground for the P-3 Orion. Beginning in the early 1960s, if not the late 1950s, as a highly classified project, Beartrap remains in operation with a \$2.5 million budget in 2013.

Beartrap's mission, as expressed to the Congressional budget committee, "is to provide Sound Pressure Level quality recordings of targets of interest and an associated new technology, rapid prototyping mechanism for the application of state-of-the-art collection sensors"

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<sup>1</sup> Background information on China and the Japanese advance through East Asia comes from: Robert Smith Thompson, Empires of the Pacific (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2001)

<sup>2</sup> The source of many statistics found throughout this work was the film *Rain of Ruin* made by The B-29 Project (©1995) shown on The History Channel (© 2004).

<sup>3</sup> Separation Qualification Record, Army of the United States, Valentine W. Smith

<sup>4</sup> *General Order 5*, Headquarters, South Pacific Base Command, 20 January 1945.

<sup>5</sup> Per radio, *Commanding General*, U.S.A.F., P.O.A., Fort Shafter, T.H., 19 February 1945, CM-IN-19983. Just in case my logic ends up being faulty, I am listing the other nine elements to keep the need for research in the future to a minimum. They were (with strength given as Officers/Enlisted Men): COMPANY HEADQUARTERS (2/9), the MESS TEAM (0/6), plus TEAMS for AUTO MECHANICS (0/2), the MESSAGE CENTER (3/17), HEAVY WIRE CONSTRUCTION (1/34) and CABLE REPAIR (0/4) with a MESSENGER (0/12) and a SWITCHBOARD (1/33) TEAM and a RADIO TELEGRAPH FIXED STATION (2/20).

<sup>6</sup> A.G. 370.5, Headquarters, South Pacific Base Command, 27 January 1945.

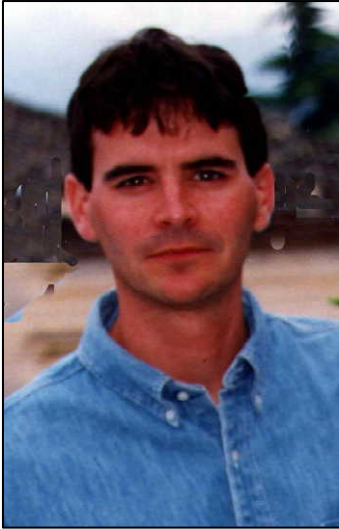
<sup>7</sup> The other units include 7 TRUCK COMPANIES, 4 ENGINEER BATTALIONS and 1 for the HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE COMPANY attached to the 4 BATTALIONS, 2 BAKERY COMPANIES, 2 ORDNANCE DEPOT COMPANIES and 1 each for the 494<sup>th</sup> ENGINEER HEAVY SHOP COMPANY, the 33<sup>d</sup> COAST ARTILLERY BATTALION and lastly, one for "BATTERY 'A' 865<sup>TH</sup> AAA AW BATTALION.

<sup>8</sup> Discharges of Military Personnel, vol. 16, p.178, Mercer County Court House, Trenton, NJ.

<sup>9</sup> 3119<sup>th</sup> Headquarters Company/Cos A/B/C & 2nd Special Platoon reunion: Alice Laustsen (908) 647-0641 (VFW Magazine, 8/1/2002)

<sup>10</sup> "In Armed Forces Joins Husband in Military Service," *Sunday Times Advertiser*, 26 September 1943, part 4, p 2, c 7

<sup>11</sup> E-mail to author from Mary Frances McElhare, Clerk, Academic Records, Drexel College, 25 June 2004.



This work not only details Dad's time in the Armed Forces, 1943 – 1946, but also shows how his military experience became a force that affected the rest of his life. It was his education and his experiences obtained between 19 to 21 years old that would have the greatest impact on his future career choices. Even before his military service began he worked for a company that was developing the first guided missiles. After completing his required military service he was Honorably Discharged and had little to do with his Signal Service team members, and he only rarely ever spoke of his service and that only with some prodding. But his seeming disinterest was not quite accurate. Among Dad's personal belongings was a box containing his military medals and many photos he had taken that documented every step of his service. So? They must have meant something to him, considering that he discarded his wedding and honeymoon albums and ALL of the 100s of 35 mm shots he took between 1953 and 1969.

His experience with In the 1950s he worked at RCA in Princeton – a research site that had very intimate ties with the Navy. In the 1960s he obtained his first security clearance from the Department of Defense to allow him to work, through RCA, on some national security projects at the Naval Art Development Center in Johnsville, PA which included a grid of sonar listening devices in the oceans to monitor all submarine activity. In the 1970s he worked, again through RCA, at the Naval Air Station on Adak – the westernmost inhabited land within the fifty states (the islands further west are not inhabited) – on what was then a secret military project called Beartrap – “Bear” symbolizing the U.S.S.R. and “trap” meaning surveillance. Starting in 1963, if not earlier, Dad's work required security clearances and, as a condition of his employment, he was forbidden to speak of the projects he worked on outside of the workplace. We have no way of knowing what it was he did while at work for at least 15 years!

In a similar vein, as you will read, his course in Signal Service Corps was not a typical one – abbreviated basic training, being one of a nine-man “Teletype Team” that had no officers and only existed from January 1945 to April 1946 – and his unit received the Meritorious Unit Commendation for reasons unknown – the orders for the commendation mentions nothing about what services the unit provided, only that were meritorious and occurred between March and October 1945 when the team was on Tinian. I have read many similar orders and all have been extremely specific – *“an event happened on this date, at this time, involving this person and his acts satisfy the requirements for the award as found in Circular 23.1342 (A thru D) in the following manor: (1) .....”* Dad maintained that he knew nothing of the Manhattan Project and had no idea that an atomic bomb was on Tinian, in fact, he said he didn't even know there was *any* special project on the island. This may be, and if it was as Dad describes, he was in a tiny minority of military personnel on Tinian that did not realize something big was happening. First, the entire north part of the island was reserved for a relatively small bomber group – one that never flew actual bombing missions and would drop strange shaped “dummy” bombs on uninhabited atolls from oddly modified B-29 Super Fortresses.. Every other Army Air Force section on the island knew *something* was up. All the movie footage I have seen of the Enola Gay shows hundreds of servicemen, a dozen searchlights everywhere, television crews, speeches and all the trappings of an event. That Dad missed all the hoopla is almost unbelievable – perhaps he just maintaining the secrecy he was sworn to all those years ago.